A

Funeral Sermon

FOR THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

THE

Lady Frances Digby,

Who Deceased

At *Coles-Hall* in *Warwickshire*, on the 29*th* of *September*, 1684.

BY

JOHN KETTLEWELL,

Vicar of *Coles-Hill* in *Warwickshire*.

LONDON,

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MDCLXXXIV.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE,

Simon Lord Digby,

BARON DIGBY

Of GEASHILL.

My Lord,

IN *compliance with Your Lordſhips Deſire, I here preſent You with this faint Portraicture of your Dear, and Excellent Lady. Thoſe rare Virtues, that endow'd her Noble Soul, had mightily endear'd her Perſon, and will always embalm her Memory, among*

thoſe that knew her. But as they rendred her a Bleſſing to this, ſo they prepared her for the Converſe of Angels, and Bleſſed Spirits in a better Place: And to compleat all his other Mercies, God has Crown'd all his Graces in her, which were ripe for Glory, by taking her to be Happy with himſelf. Had he lent us the Bleſſing for a longer Time, her Life would have been moſt truly inſtructing, and had the daily uſe and benefit of a Sermon. But ſince it has pleaſed him to take away the Original, 'tis pity the World ſhould want the Copy too, and loſe the Benefit of her Example. Your Lordſhip has already reaped much Profit, and is ſtill in hope to receive more, by reflecting on it Your ſelf: And You truſt it may bring a like Advantage, and ſerve to kindle and cheriſh like Inclinations, in the Hearts of many others alſo. I am ſure it is very fit for General uſe, and will do good to all that hear of it, if they are not wanting to themſelves. For ſhe was a very lively Draught of many excellent Virtues; and they muſt either be perfectly Good, (as none are in this World) or extremely bad Souls, who cannot improve by being ſet in the Light of ſuch Patterns.

One main Hindrance of this good Effect, my Lord, is the ſuſpicion of Flattery and Inſincerity in theſe Diſcourſes, as if in them Men were not careful of ſtrict Truth, and ſought not ſo much what may be truly ſaid,

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as what may ſet off their Subject. I cannot promiſe this Relation any Security from ſuch Cenſures, ſince the trueſt, and moſt faithful Accounts in this kind, cannot always avoid them. But I have this Teſtimony in my ſelf, That in the Deſcription I have given of this excellent Perſon, I have ſpoken nothing to deſerve them. I have repreſented her as moſt exemplary, and imitable, in Modeſty, and Sincerity; and I am ſure I have had a great Concern upon me, not to loſe either in Diſcourſing of her. I know there is not only Sincerity, but Care too required in every one, who will take upon him to be a Reporter: And this I have held my Eye upon, in all the Parts of her Character. I freely confeſs to Your Lordſhip, my Aim has been to ſpeak too little, for fear of ſaying too much; and that I have deſignedly uſed warineſs in ſeveral Expreſſions, leſt venturing to the utmoſt Bounds of Truth, I might happen to ſtep beyond them. And whatever Judgment they may paſs, who knew little of her, I have this to ſatisfie my ſelf, and the World too, that they who knew her beſt, and eſpecially Your Lordſhip, will ſay this is not only a True, but a Modeſt Character.

I heartily wiſh, my Lord, this Draught of Your Dear Lady, were fitter than it is, to ſerve Your Lordſhips Ends, of rendring her Example uſeful to the World, and doing Honour to her Memory. I hope, thro'

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the Grace of God, and Your Piety and diſcreet Care, that the Repreſentation of her Virtues will not renew Your Grief, which ſhews her to be ſet above it. For it would trouble me to think I have ſent a Companion into Your Retirements, to miniſter to Sadneſs and dejected Thoughts, and render this Service, which is perform'd with willingneſs, uneaſie in the Remembrance of it, to,

My Good Lord,

Your Lordſhips moſt Affectionate,

Humble Servant,

From your Lordſhips houſe near Coles-hill, *Oct.* 23. 1684.

John Kettlewell.

[redacted]

A FUNERAL SERMON

For the Right Honourable,

The Lady *FRANCES DIGBY*,

Preached *Oct.* 5. 1684. at *Coles-Hill* in *Warwickshire*,

On Prov. XIV. 32.

——But the Righteous hath Hope in his Death.

THeſe words deſcribe the different State of *Good* and *bad* men, and ſhew how happy the one, and how wretched the other are, when ſome great Affliction, eſpecially when Death ſeizes them. In the Time of Health and Proſperity, the Wicked often ſeem the happieſt Perſons; they injoy ſo much of the Bounty of Providence, as if God were pleaſed with them; which puffs them up with a conceit of their own Happineſs, and makes others envy them. But when any great Diſtreſs, eſpecially when Death comes, that always makes

makes the Diſcrimination. Tranſgreſſors then are in a moſt deplorable State, and moſt deſtitute of Comforts when they moſt need them. But the Righteous have a good Support, and begin thoſe Joys, which will never end, or be diminiſhed. The faſter they are flying from the World, the nearer they approach to Almighty God: When their Condition ſeems at the worſt, 'tis really almoſt at the beſt; for then they are upheld by a chearful Hope, and are preſently to be inſtated in the joyful Poſſeſſion of an everlaſting Kingdom. *The Wicked is driven away in his Wickedneſs: i.e.* When great Diſtreſs, eſpecially when Death comes, he can promiſe nothing to himſelf, but is driven from all his Hopes by the Conſcience of his own Wickedneſs, which bids him ſtill expect more, and greater Miſeries: *But the Righteous* knows he ſhall be a Gainer by it, and *has hope in his Death.*

This difference is not always true in Point of *Fact*, as if good Men alwaies left the World with a quiet Mind and comfortable Hope, and ill men in Horror and Aſtoniſhment. Thus indeed it often is. For the Righteous ordinarily die in Peace, and that is enough to verifie the Text, which is a *Proverbial* Speech: For *Proverbs* do not expreſs a Rule that never alters, but that doth not alter ordinarily, in the uſual Obſervation and Courſe of things. And the Wicked oftentimes

tentimes are full of Fears, eſpecially when they have been guilty of *Groſs* and *Crying* Sins, which are more apt to ſtrike Terror upon the Conſcience. But tho' in the Caſe of good men this do *generally* fall out, and in the Caſe of bad men very *frequently*, yet in neither of them is it *conſtant*. For ſome Righteous Souls are miſled in judging of themſelves by Scrupulous Principles; or are full of melancholly, which is a timorous Paſſion, and betrays them to unreaſonable Fears: And they, it may be, dye with troubled, and terrified Conſciences. And many of the Wicked are poſſeſſed with a preſumptuous belief of Gods Goodneſs; or are full of Pride and Self-Flattery, and, by mincing and hiding their own Faults, and unreaſonably magnifying every little Performance and Attainment, think too well of themſelves: And they dye ſwoln big with hopes, and vain Confidences. So that in *Fact*, tho' it be ordinarily, yet ſometimes it is not true, that good men have Hope in their Death, and ill men want it.

But tho' it be not always true in Point of *Fact*, yet it always is in the *Ground* and *Reaſon* of it. A wicked Liver has always Cauſe to be diſmay'd, tho' he will not believe it till he feels it. And a Righteous man has always Cauſe of hope in Death, if he has but the underſtanding to diſcern it. And whether he ſee it or no, he ſhall be ſure to find the Benefit, and

be a Gainer by it. And in this Senſe the Words admit of no exception, that when the Wicked wants, *the Righteous has hope in his Death, i. e.* he has moſt juſt Reaſon ſo to do.

In diſcourſing upon theſe Words, I ſhall ſhew,

1. *Who the Righteous man is, to whom this Priviledge belongs.*

2. *What are his hopes, that make Death a deſirable thing to him, which to others is the King of Terrors.*

3. *Apply this, to allay our Grief and Sorrow on the Death of Friends.*

1. I ſhall ſhew *who the Righteous man is, to whom this Priviledge belongs.* And that is every man, who has *lead a good Life*, and *has not allow'd himſelf in any known Sins*, but *had a regard to all Gods Commandments.*

He is one that *has led a Godly Life.* This is the true Teſt to deſcry who are Righteous, which we are to judge of, not from ſome Religious heats, or tranſient Convictions, or good wiſhes; but from the Tenor of a Pious Practice. *He that doth good*, ſaith St. *John, is of God*, 3 *Joh.* 11. and again, *let no man deceive you* in this Point; *for he that doth Righteouſneſs is Righteous, even as he is Righteous.* 1 *Jo.* 3. 7. And it is the only ſure Ground of Hope for dying Perſons. He muſt have lived Holily, who would dye happily, for it is nothing elſe but an holy Life that can make happy.

happy. That is the only ſure Preparation for Death, ſince it is the main thing to be inquired of after Death; for then men ſhall all be *judged according to their Works.* Rev. 20. 13.

In one Caſe, 'tis true, *good Purpoſes* will make happy, tho' a man has *never practiſed* them. And that is in the Caſe of ſuch *dying Penitents*, as God ſees have both *Sincerity* and *Strength* enough of Godly purpoſe, and by means thereof would certainly Practiſe well if they had but Time. But as for theſe, they are ſo very few, that they ſeem not to be of any great account in the Deſcription of the Righteous. Converſion, in the ordinary courſe, goes on by ſteps; Gods Grace is infuſed, and our wicked Luſts are mortified by degrees; and without an unwonted, and extraordinary Grace, (which no man muſt expect, and leaſt of all they who have ſlighted all Gods Gracious offers to the very laſt,) it is not to be begun and finiſhed in the laſt Moments. The Righteous ordinarily, are only ſuch, as have done Righteouſneſs in their Lives; and among all the numerous Attempters, 'tis hard to find thoſe, who can ſucceed and become Righteous, by forming good Reſolutions upon their Death-beds. And as for thoſe who do then become ſuch, it is more than they can know themſelves. For no man that is only beginning to reſolve well, can know the ſtrength and

efficacy of his own Reſolutions, till he comes to try and Practiſe them: And till he knows that, tho' he may have the *Safety*, yet he can not have the *Comfort* and the *hopes* of a Righteous man. Bare purpoſes, rarely give Safety, but never Comfort to a dying Perſon; ſo that the Hopes of the Righteous muſt not reſt on them alone, but have ſomething elſe, *viz.* a *well led Life*, to bottom on.

And this Life muſt have been *uniform in all Duties*, when a man *has not allow'd himſelf in any known Sins*, but has had a *Regard to all Gods Commandments*.

Some parcel out the Law of God, and think to be Righteous for performing ſome particular things. This ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors made very eaſie, declaring that a man might be Righteous by obſerving *any one Commandment* which he pleaſed. For theſe are ſome of their Rules. * *Qui dat operam Præcepto, liber eſt a Præcepto. He that exerciſes himſelf in any one Precept, for that time is freed from minding any other.* And again, *whoſoever ſhall perform any one of the 613. Precepts of the Law* (for ſo many they are according to their reckoning) *without any worldly reſpect, for Love of the Precept, ſhall inherit thereby Everlaſting Life.* But when they would be more ſecure, and act more commendably, they would not content themſelves with any of the Precepts indifferently,

* See Mr. *Smiths* learned diſcourſe of a legal Righteouſneſs among his Sel. Diſcourſ. c. 3. p. 290. &c.

rently, but make a choice, according to the eſtimation which they thought God himſelf had of them. For they fancied, that he did not rate all his Laws equally, but eſteem'd ſome more than others: As the *Lawyer* plainly ſhew'd, when he deſired to be ſatisfied *which was the great Commandment of the Law*, *Mat.* 22. 36. and the *young man*, when he ask'd *what good thing he ſhould do to have Eternal Life*, i. e. of all the good things whereto Life is promiſed, whether was the Sabbath, or Sacrifices, or which other Precept beſt; what was that good thing, which would moſt ſecure it, *Mat.* 19. 16. And fancying there were ſome ſuch darling Precepts, they thought he was moſt ſure to be acceptably Righteous, who had the good luck to hit upon that Command, which God moſt accounted of. And the like Opinions, tho', God be thanked, not authorized by the common ſayings of our Doctors, are moſt unhappily got into the Hopes, and Practice of too many among our ſelves; nay, alas! of the generality of Chriſtians. For they too often think to paſs for Righteous men, only on the ſcore of ſome *particular* Obſervances, as being conſtant in Prayers, or Liberal in Alms, or zealous in Gods Cauſe, eſpecially if that be in ſome notable inſtance, and perform'd with great hazards; without having an Eye all this while to their whole Duty, and whilſt at the ſame time they allow themſelves in ſome known Sins.

Sins. But whilſt after this rate they mangle the Law of God, and parcel out their Duty, their thoughts of Righteouſneſs are but a Dream, and all their hopes a vain Preſumption. No Duties will ſave us when they are ſingled out from the reſt, and ſtand alone; but only when they are all in Conjunction. St. *Paul* inſtances in *two*, *viz.* *Giving all he has to feed the Poor*, and *giving his Body to be burnt in Martyrdom*, which will eaſily be allow'd to have preference before all others. But yet, ſays he, if theſe go by themſelves, and *have not Charity*, which, as he deſcribes it, *v.* 4. 5. *&c.* beſides Alms, contains in it many other inſtances, *it profits me nothing*, 1 Cor. 13. 3.

The Righteous man then, is one who has an eye to all Gods Laws, and whenſoever he tranſgreſſes any, doth not allow himſelf in that breach, but riſes again by Repentance. This is Righteouſneſs in any Perſon. And without this, the Hopes in Death, which the Text mentions, will avail nothing. For many men are full of Hope, who have no juſt Cauſe for it; and, on the contrary, others are afraid to Dye, who may juſtly meet Death with comfort. The melancholly of ſome, and the Sanguine Complexion of others, fill them with hopes and fears, which are not owing to the Reaſon of things, but only to their natural Tempers: So that to ſhew any man a dying Saint, that has Cauſe to rejoice in Death, it is not enough

that

that he have Peace of mind, but alſo that he have juſt ground for it too.

And thus having ſhewn who this righteous man is, to whom this Priviledge belongs: I proceed now,

2. To ſhew *what are his Hopes, that make Death a deſirable thing to him, which to others is the King of Terrors.*

Now this Hope is of the favour and friendſhip of Almighty God, and of all thoſe Bleſſings which may be expected from it. What thoſe Bleſſings are, was not ſo well known in old times, when God led men on by more dark, and indefinite expectations of the Future Happineſs. But when Chriſt came, he * *brought Life and immortality to Light*, and has told us plainly, that at their Deaths, all Righteous men ſhall be tranſlated to the unſpeakable and eternal Joys of Heaven. And theſe are ſo great, that no heart can wiſh for more. For the bleſſings of that Place are ſo large, as to fill all our Capacities; ſo pure, as not to have the leaſt mixture of Sorrows; ſo conſtant, as to admit of no abatements, or intermiſſions. We ſhall always deſire, and always be ſatisfied; and when we have injoy'd the moſt, we ſhall never be cloy'd, nor wearied with it. We ſhall live in Gods Preſence, and ſhare in his Likeneſs, and ſhine in his Glory, and have Fellowſhip with the Saviour of the

* 2 *Tim.* 1. 10.

the World, and all the ſpotleſs Angels, and all the Glorified Saints and Godlike Perſons, whoſe Society alone is enough to turn any Place into a Paradiſe. And all theſe we ſhall enjoy, without all fear of Misfortune, either theirs, or our own; without all danger of diſpleaſing them, or fear of loſing them; without ſeeing any thing, either to pity, or blame in them; or any damps of Friendſhip, and intermiſſion of Affection. In ſum, we ſhall never ſee any ill, nor ſuffer it; nor ever want any good thing, or, when we have it, fear to be deprived of it: But we ſhall be infinitely happy, and ever think our ſelves ſo, and continue in that State for evermore.

This is that Eternal Life, which God promiſes, and whereto Death now conveys all Righteous Perſons. And ſince it is the way to our injoyment of all this Bliſs, it is no longer a Spoyler of our Joys, but a Step to them, and a thing to be deſired by all Godly Souls. It is, indeed, like churliſh Phyſick, very ungrateful in it ſelf, tho' it may be moſt deſireable in the effect. It brings a Diſſolution of Nature, which ſtrikes Horror, and that into the beſt men, who would deſire not to Dye, if they could come at the happineſs of the other Life without dying. And this St. *Paul* teſtifies of himſelf, confeſſing, that as for the way of receiving the *Heavenly houſe*, *i. e.* the glorified Body, he had rather be *found alive*, and have it

ſuper-

ſuperinduced by a tranſlation; than be ſtripp'd of this Body firſt by Death, and afterwards be *cloath'd* again. My wiſh, ſays he, is *not to be uncloath'd, i.e.* to put off this Body firſt, *but to be cloathed upon* by having the other ſuperinduced, *that mortality may* not ſo truly be put off, as *ſwallowed up of Life*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. 4. But it is moſt incomparably advantageous in the Event. Tho' the way be hard and rugged, yet 'tis ſhort, and the Prize at the end is wonderfully Rich and Pleaſant: So that every conſiderate man, who looks beyond Death, hath the greateſt Reaſon to deſire it. To them, as St. *Paul* ſays, it has quite loſt its * *Sting*, and is become the trueſt *Gain.* * 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. *Phil.* 1. 21. All ſenſe of what it takes away, is drown'd in the boundleſs apprehenſion of what it gives, and *Death is ſwallowed up in victory.* 1 *Cor.* 15. 54. It confers on them all their hearts can deſire, and therefore, if they rightly conſider it, ought not to be a matter of their Fear: It takes them from a Dunghill to a Throne, and inveſts them in all the Glory and Riches of an everlaſting Kingdom.

I come now

3. To *apply this, to allay our Grief and Sorrow on the Death of Friends.*

I do not ſeek to ſuppreſs all Grief for a dying Friend; for that is an impoſſible Task. Friendſhip is a cloſe thing, and lies near to our Hearts; ſo near,

indeed, that a Friend is ſaid, and that very juſtly, to be a *Second ſelf.* And therefore to be inſenſible when a dear Friend is torn from us, is as impoſſible, as to have no ſenſe when a Finger is rent off from our Hand, or our Heart is plucked out of our Bodies. Some Courſe Nature will have in ſpite of all Arguments, and no man can reſtrain it. Yea, and what is more, it is not fit he ſhould do it, if he could. For ſome ſorrowful concern is neceſſary to ſhew we are ſenſible of our Loſs, and to evidence our Affection for the Perſon that is gone: As the *Jews*, when *Jeſus wept* for *Lazarus*, cryed out *Behold how he loved him. Jo.* 11. 35. 36. The unconcernedneſs of the Living, ſeems a reflection upon the Dead, and argues they were not beloved while they lived, but that the World was weary of their Company, and even their pretended Friends very willing, if not glad, to be quit of them. And therefore it is reckon'd as a Part of *Gods Judgment* upon the *Jews*, that when they *died, there ſhould be no wailing for them. Ezek.* 7. 11. But with this Grief for our own Loſs in the departure of our Friends, we muſt at the ſame time ſhew our ſelves ſenſible who it is that has taken them, and that too for their own Gain, and that he ſtill continues to us a thouſand Bleſſings when he only calls back one. And therefore with Sorrow for them, we muſt be ſure to joyn Submiſſion to God; to reſign up our Wills

Wills to his, and be not only outwardly ſilent, but inwardly renconciled to what he has done; and to be heartiful thankful, both for all the Kindneſſeſs he ſhew'd our departed Friends, and for that vaſt Number of others he ſtill continues to our ſelves. Theſe things will not be perform'd as they ought, when Grief grows ſtrong. Whilſt it keeps within due bounds, ſuch as ſuit with the Apprehenſions and Hope of Chriſtians, it is what Natural Affection will force from us, and what Religion allows: But when it becomes ungovernable and boiſterous in Degrees, or obſtinate in Continuance, it is in it ſelf an ill thing, an irreſiſtible Temptation. So that when we do grieve, we muſt be careful to keep back from all exceſs, and to do it with moderation. And to temper our Grief, which needs a moſt watchful care to govern and allay it upon theſe occaſions; among thoſe many things that might be ſuggeſted, I ſhall only obſerve theſe two; *viz.* That, *when our Friends are truly Religious*,

1. We have not the leaſt pretence *to be immoderate out of our Love to them*, becauſe it is *incomparably their Gain*. They are tranſlated to a Place of Bliſs, where they are infinitely joyful in their own minds, and from whence they would not be removed by any offers: So that we have no colour of Reaſon to be ſad, but the higheſt Cauſe to congratulate upon their

Accounts; as the *Primitive* Chriſtians of old, and we ſtill do, for the Death of *Saints* and *Martyrs*, the Memorials of whoſe Death we celebrate with *Feſtivals*, as the Day of their Birth to an immortal Life. If we have a true and wiſe Love for our Friends, we ſhall not only be willing, but glad above all that God ſhould Love them too. And then we muſt needs be thankful when he ſhews his Love, and takes them to thoſe Joys, which are the end of all their Hope, and beyond which they can never wiſh for any more.

2. Nor have we any Reaſon *to be immoderate in bemoaning our own Loſs*, becauſe *we ſhall go to the ſame Place, and meet again in time.* Our own Loſs, indeed, is the only thing that can trouble us, and when we do Grieve and Mourn, it is only in love to our ſelves. But this is no cauſe at all to be intemperate, or obſtinate in Grief; for it will all be made up again, if we will have a little Patience. They are gone to that Place, whither we all hope to come; ſo that if we can ſtay a while, we ſhall injoy our Friends again. Their departure from the World, is but like mens taking of a Journey, not an utter Loſs of Friends, but only an abſence from them for a ſmall ſpace. And when once that is paſt, the next meeting ſhall be in ſo great, and laſting Joy, as ſhall infinitely make amends for it. For then our Friends ſhall be ſtript of all Humane Frailties, and made abſolute in all deſirable

firable Perfections, which will make them more deſerving of our Love, and dearer to us; and that Love ſhall never cauſe Grief and Torment, as it doth now, by a ſecond abſence. As we ſhall be moſt happy in them, ſo ſhall we ever be ſecure of them; for then there will not be the leaſt Fear, becauſe not the leaſt danger or poſſibility of parting any more.

And thus I have done with the Explication of the Text, and ſhewn both who the Righteous are, and what great and comfortable things, when Death comes, they have to hope for.

But hitherto I have only *laid down the Rule*, and I have ſtill another Work to do, which is, to *ſet it off* yet further, in a *fair Pattern and Example of it*: I mean the *Excellent Noble Perſon now Deceaſed*, the Character of whoſe Virtues will give Life to all that I have ſaid, and be the beſt, and moſt uſeful thing in all my Sermon. She was a great Inſtance of many Virtues, nay, of ſome, which are almoſt loſt in Practice, which ſeem to reign ſcarce any were but upon mens Tongues, as if they were impracticable Rules, that were never intended to be follow'd and perform'd, but only to be prais'd and talk'd of. And I cannot do more right to thoſe neglected Graces, than to ſhew the remiſs and ſlothful World they are more than Words, and are real live things, made viſible to all in the excellency of her Practice.

God

God had endow'd her with an *excellent Nature*, which prevented many of the great Self-denials in Religion, and made it to her a tolerably eaſie thing. This is an invaluable Bleſſing God beſtows on ſome ſpecial Favourites, and it was eminent in her. To be univerſally kind and pleaſing, was one of the moſt Natural things in her Complexion, which made a Religion of Love be imbraced without oppoſition. And together with this kindneſs of Nature, he had bleſs'd her with much humbleneſs of Mind, and with a juſt ſeriouſneſs and compoſure of Spirit, which made her apt for Devotion and wiſe Counſels, and eaſie to receive, and retain any good Impreſſions, which ſhould be ſtamped upon her.

Together with this Goodneſs of Nature, as another Teſtimony of his ſingular Grace and Favour, he had provided for her an *excellently Virtuous*, *Wiſe*, and *careful Mother*; who begun early to cultivate this rich Soyl, and plant the Seeds of Virtue in it, e're the Vices of the World could make their Attempts upon her. She taught her Goodneſs by plain Rules, and ſhew'd it to the Life in an admirable and a brave Example. And her Pattern this prepared Soul knew ſo well how to prize, that ſhe had choſen it for her own imitation; reſolving to govern her ſelf by her Mothers Rules, and to fix her eye upon her Noble Virtues, and, as near as ſhe could, to tranſcribe them in her own Practice.

ctice. And this ſhews a generous liking of Goodneſs, and promiſes a great Progreſs in it, when any Perſons aim, ſo far as they are able, to equal the moſt accompliſhed Saints, and to live up to the Rules of the beſt Examples.

And to compleat all, when ſhe was deprived of this Bleſſing, his watchful Care provided a *Husband* for her, who to the intimacy of his Relation to her as a *Wife*, the top of worldly Friendſhips, coveted to add a Nobler Friendſhip ſtill, that bottom'd upon likeneſs of Souls and virtuous Grounds, and was deſign'd to ſerve the moſt excellent Purpoſes of Religion, in making each other Better and Wiſer, which is the Perfection of the Wiſeſt, and moſt exalted Friendſhips, betwixt the moſt endear'd Perſons.

Thus liberally had God endow'd this ſelect Soul with Inclinations to Virtue and Goodneſs, and with Opportunities to ripen and improve them. And had he ſpared her a longer Life, wherein to imploy the Talents he had given, we may juſtly expect the Increaſe would have been in a greater Meaſure and Proportion. But tho her Race was quickly done (for ſhe dyed in the *twenty third* year of her Age) yet ſhe had run much in a little time: in her green Years ſhe had attain'd a Maturity in Goodneſs, and was grown ripe in the true Ends and Art of Living; and the effect of theſe Advantages was viſible in an exemplary

exemplary, and truly Christian Conversation. To recount all her Virtues, is more than I can pretend to do; they were known only to God, who will reveal them at last to all the World; but for the imitation of those she has left behind her, I shall observe these following.

Her *Piety* was great towards *Almighty God*. She knew what Honour and Homage we all owe to him, and was careful to lay out her self upon it. She would converse with him duly in her Closet-retirements; and constantly make one to do him Service in the Publick Assemblies, not allowing her self to neglect the Service of God for little Reasons and Inconveniencies, which can keep none back, but those who have too little Zeal for God, and too much slothfulness or delicacy of Spirit. And, which shew'd how sincerely she resorted thither, not at all to set off her self, but purely for Pious Ends, at Church she did affect plainness of Dress, and would not seek there to recommend her self to others, no not in the most publick Places, by elaborate Attire and *outward adorning*; but only to God by the Devotion of her Mind, and the Ornament of an *humble* and a *meek Spirit*, (things wherein she is was hardly be equall'd), *which in the sight of God*, as St. * *Peter* says, *are of great Price.* She was in a constant Preparation, as all good Souls are, for the Holy Sacrament, and careful

* 1 *Pet* 3. 34.

ful to embrace all Opportunities of joyning in it: For ſince I had the Happineſs to obſerve her, ſhe never miſſed a Communion, but was always one in that higheſt Inſtance of Devotion, to offer up the Sacrifice of a Devout Heart, and thankfully acknowledge the Stupendious Love of God, and of our Deareſt Saviour to Mankind. Such was the *Devotion* of this Fair Saint towards Almighty God, which did not come upon her by Fits, but was a ſettled Habit, that dwelt upon her Spirit. And in all this ſhe ſhew'd an inward, and hearty Piety, as one that plainly ſought to be Good between her ſelf, and him that ſees in ſecret. For her Religion did not ſeek to ſhew it ſelf in an affected Out-ſide, in ſtudied Appearances, in Talk and Noiſe; but in all the Modeſty, Silence, and Gravity, of an hearty and unaffected Godlineſs. She was Good after the beſt Faſhion, in an inward Religion: Which, tho' it ſhew'd it ſelf in ſuch Reverent and Compoſed Meen, as naturally flow'd from, and teſtified a Spirit greatly affected; yet did not appear in any thing, which could ſeem choſen for Shew or Oſtentation.

And as ſhe was thus careful to addreſs to God, ſo, which is a more real Inſtance of a governing Piety, could ſhe *quietly reſign* her ſelf to his Will in the hardeſt Providences, and *truſt* him with any

thing. The beſt Remedy in Afflictions, as ſhe ſaid, was *Prayer to God:* And when ſhe was tried with them, ſhe found the Effect of it, in an humble, calm, and unconteſting Reſignation. And to ſhew the firm and ſettled confidence ſhe had fix'd in his Care; when ſhe was ſurprized with Death, the *Sweet Babe* ſhe was to leave behind her, ſhe look'd on as ſo ſecure in the Cuſtody of Almighty God, and the Care of her Dear Husband, that the Thoughts of it did not in the leaſt trouble her.

As to the *Government of her ſelf*, and thoſe Virtues which were chiefly due to her own Perſon; ſhe was endow'd with an *even Temper*, and the *Command of her own Inclinations*, and *Contempt of the World*, with *Humility*, *Sincerity*, and other Virtues, and was a very great Example in them.

She was ſingularly happy in an *even Temper*, not violently tranſported, but only duly affected whatever happened. No Proſperous Accidents could over-joy, nor croſs Events unmeaſurably diſturb her. Yea, even in her Bodily Pains ſhe would keep her evenneſs, and ſhew nothing of a diſturbed Spirit, wherein Religion, and the conſtant Goodneſs of her Inclination had loſt the Reins; but was wont even then to be pleaſed with all that was done about her, and to be careful in what ſhe did or ſaid her ſelf to pleaſe all.

She

She had a *ſtrange Government of her own Deſires* and *Inclinations*, and could command and reſtrain them almoſt in any thing. This is a notable Inſtance of Religion, the greateſt part and hardſhip whereof lies in *denying of our ſelves*, as Sin doth in *Self-pleaſing*. And this the Wiſeſt, and Beſt Men have ſtill thought, as the moſt difficult, ſo the Braveſt, and moſt Noble Undertaking. It is not ſo illuſtrious a Point of Maſtery, and part of Valour in any man to conquer another, as to conquer his own Paſſion; and he ſhews a greater height of Reſolution and Bravery that overcomes himſelf, than he who ſubdues a City. And ſhe was a Noble Inſtance of this Maſtery. Indeed, I think, ſhe could deny her ſelf what ſhe pleas'd, and croſs any Inclination for a good end, and not be troubled at it. She was deveſted of her ſelf, and was anothers Good, which is the Character of a Good Perſon; ready to do any thing for anothers, and to forgo any thing that made for her own ſatisfaction.

She had a *Generous contempt of the World*, and tho' ſhe had ever been in the midſt of all that could make her value, and be in Love with it, and was in the Spring of her Years, which is an Age moſt ſubject to admire it: Yet ſhe kept it ſtill without her, and liv'd above it. She ſprung from an Illuſtrious,

Noble Stock; but she was not forward to make known the Honour of her Blood, nor seem'd to prize her self upon it. She shew'd the true Spirit of Nobility; which is, when all others, to keep up Degrees and good Order in the World, do Respect and Honour Titles, that they who wear them overlook and despise them, and value themselves only upon what is their own, not what is derived from Ancestors. And as for all the Splendor, and Gratifications of the World; she seem'd generally so indifferent in the pursuit, and so unaffected in the use of them, as plainly shew'd she sat loose from them. Had she lived always in the Eye of worldly Vanities, I think in some measure they would have taken off the mind, either of her, or of any other, from God and better things. But besides this, as for any other Effects, I doubt 'tis hard to find a Person, that might be safelier trusted with them. For as for their being otherwise a Snare, she was so indifferent, they could not much have tempted her. And having this contempt of the World, she could easily part with any of the Riches of it for Good and Wise Ends, but not for any others, for she was so much above Shew, and so inclined to solid Goodness, that her Generosity would not spend it self upon Vanity or Extravagance: But on any Charitable, or Good occasion, she had a Generous Soul, and would

would both readily, and Liberally contribute. That, indeed, was her hearts delight, and if ſhe valued Money, whereof ſhe ſhew'd a great Neglect, upon any account, it was for the opportunity and ſatisfaction of doing good with it.

Humility was her beloved Grace, which ſhe ſought of God with earneſtneſs, and which ſhe had attain'd to Admiration. She had a ſtrange Modeſty in her Nature, which made her conceit meanly of her ſelf, and render'd her very backward to believe any thing in her could deſerve Praiſe, and almoſt afraid to receive it. She ſaw too much of emptineſs in all thoſe things that puff us up, to be Proud of any of them. She might have been exalted in her own Mind, by reflecting upon her High Birth, and her great advantages of Eſtate and Honour. But ſhe had a juſt eſtimate of all, and did not think her ſelf the better or more deſerving becauſe ſhe had, nor others the worſe becauſe they wanted them. Nay, her great Virtues, which were Solid Goods, did not exalt her in her own Opinion. I think ſhe ſtrove to conceal them from her ſelf: And as for any Oſtentation of them abroad; ſhe was ſo (I had almoſt ſaid) over-modeſt, and extreamly nice in that, that one ſhall not ordinarily ſee more care in others to ſhew forth their Goodneſs, than was in her to hide it.

Sinceri-

Sincerity and an *undiſſembling heart*, were not only the Religion of her Choice, but the Virtue of her Nature. No Perſon need be more reſerv'd in any thing, that ſhould be kept a Secret; and none more true, and plain-hearted in what ſhe ſpoke. She knew not how to act double in any thing, and, indeed, ſhe needed not, having no Thoughts or Ends to conceal and be aſham'd of. For ſhe was obliging, without all Deſigns, and uſed to harbor no Thoughts of any, but what were good; and purſue no Aims, but what were Honourable and Juſt: So that whenever ſhe ſpoke, ſhe might ſay the Truth, and had no great Temptation to diſguiſe it.

Theſe are ſome of thoſe Excellencies, which did adorn her ſelf, and were due unto her own Perſon.

And then as for her *Carriage towards all the World beſides*, how truly Chriſtian a Part did ſhe act in that, in a conſtant *kindneſs*, *candor*, and *intire eaſineſs of Converſation*. In all which, her Life was full of deſerv'd Praiſe to her ſelf, and very uſeful and inſtructive unto others, fit to direct the Lives, and excite the Imitation of all thoſe, who had the opportunity to behold it.

She was truly kind, and full of *Charity* and *good Nature* to all that converſed with her. Her ſingular Modeſty

Modeſty was a great Reſtraint to her in takeing Acquaintance, and this, perhaps, may be miſconſtrued by ſome, who have not either the Skill, or Care to diſcern betwixt diſtruſt of ones ſelf, and neglect of others. But in reality ſhe had both an humble, and a kind heart, prepared to oblige and pleaſe all with whom ſhe had to do. She thought no Perſon was too mean for her to know, and every one ſhe knew, or indeed ſaw, ſhe was Naturally Courteous and Reſpective to. Affable, and eaſie of Acceſs ſhe was to all; and particularly to thoſe, who had any thing to ask of her. And when ſhe was to diſpenſe a Charity, ſhe had, as a Liberal, ſo a tender Hand, careful not only to ſupply the Neceſſity, but, what is a doubling of any Gift, to ſave the Modeſty of the Receiver. For her Favours came ſo eaſily and freely from her, and ſhe appear'd to be ſo pleas'd with them her ſelf, as would not only incourage, but invite a Beggar. She loved to ſee all Perſons pleas'd, and ſo ſparing was she of any thing that might trouble them, that tho' ſhe would be compaſſionate, and bear a part in their Sorrows, yet her own ſhould be to her ſelf, and if ſhe could help it, they should ſeldom bear any in hers. Her Deſire was to be eaſie and obliging unto all, and her Study, but, indeed, she needed not to ſtudy it, to offend none. And this Goodneſs was a ſettled Temper

per, ſo firmly rooted in her, that neither outward occurrences, nor bodily indiſpoſitions, (which are apt to prevail on others, and muſt needs tempt her,) made her fretful, and uneaſie to thoſe about her; and I think it may be as truly ſaid of her, as it can well be of any, that ſhe was alwaies in good Humour.

She was a Perſon of *extraordinary Candor*, in conſtruing all that others did, or ſaid. Here, indeed, she excell'd, and, I doubt, is rarely to he parallell'd. She had the Wit to make Interpretations of all ſorts, but her Goodneſs ſtill determined them on the kind ſide. So that the Good needed not to fear her Cenſure, and, if they muſt fall under any, the Faulty had much Reaſon to deſire it. Nay, ſo Chriſtianly nice was her Charity in this point, that as she would not make Reflections on others Weakneſſes, or ſay a ſevere thing her ſelf; ſo, as has been ſeveral times obſerv'd, she could give no Approbation to it, when others did it. If she did not become their Advocate, in ſuggeſting ſomething in their excuſe; she uſed to rebuke their Accuſers by her Silence, or her Countenance. For ſo truly did she make her Neighbours Concern her own, that she could not ordinarily lend ſo much as a Smile, to any Ridiculous, or ſmart thing, which was ſaid againſt them.

Thus candid was she in judging, or ſpeaking of what

what was done, or ſaid by others; and this she was, where one is tempted to be moſt ſuſpicious, *viz. in things which related to her ſelf.* For even in them, she could ſuſpect no hurt, becauſe she meant none. She had ſuch a Native Simplicity, and Generous Goodneſs in her own Breaſt, that she could not without great Proof, and hardly then too, ſuſpect otherwiſe of any other Perſon. Scarce any where shall one finde a Nature more ſlow to take things ill, and reſent Unkindneſſes; or that has ſo great a Memory as hers in other things, and yet is ſo very apt, as she was, to forget them.

She was a very *eaſie Perſon in all Converſe*, not given, as I noted, to trouble any with her own Praiſe, or the Diſpraiſe of others, and evidencing an eſteem of every Perſon but her ſelf. She was too Generous, and good Natured, to ſcorn any for their Meanneſs; or to deride them for their Folly, and Impertinence. Whereſoever ſhe went, her cuſtom was to take all things kindly, finding no faults, and much leſs ſpeaking of them. She was a very deſirable Perſon to be concern'd with, either in conferring, or receiving kindneſſes: For when others did any thing for her, she thought it was too much; but what she could do for them, she overlooked as if she had done nothing. She expected ſo little to her ſelf, that she was never apt to take exceptions;

and was ſo humble, innocent, and obliging, that she was in little danger of doing any thing for others to except againſt. Scarce any thing could anger her, that was done to her, and much leſs would any thing anger others, that paſſed from her. So that every one was ſure to be at eaſe, and have nothing to provoke them, whil'ſt they kept her Company.

She *ſpoke not much*, but was of few words; a great Art of keeping Innocence, (eſpecially in an Age that abounds in Cenſure) under all the Temptations to Diſcourſe, and of having little to Repent of. This, perhaps, ſome may think, whatever it be of their Virtue and Wiſdom, is no Commendation of the Wit and Parts of any Perſon. But every Wiſe Man knows, that Underſtanding conſiſts in Wiſe and Pertinent, and not in much talking. God had given her a ſolid Reaſon, and when she did ſpeak, it was truly Pertinent, and worth the hearing. And during all the time I have had the Happineſs to obſerve her, I do not remember what frivolous, or fond thing I have heard come from her. She could not allow her ſelf to ſay ill of any, nor could lend a Word, or ſpare, as I ſaid, ſo much as a Smile in approbation when others did; and therefore whenſoever the Faults and Blemiſhes of Perſons was the Topick of Diſcourſe, it was little she had to

ſpeak.

ſpeak. But tho' her Diſcourſe was the leſs upon that account, yet I am ſure the Example is good, and it was the more innocent and profitable, which makes an abundant amends for it.

In a word, She was a truly *excellent*, and *amiable Perſon*; plentifully indow'd with thoſe Qualities that may gain Love, and with thoſe Virtues which deſerve Imitation. And she had this Teſtimony of her Worth, which shews not only the reality, but the greatneſs of it; she was not, as too many others are, liked beſt at firſt, but ſtill grew higher in eſteem, as she was longer and better known. For she had ſuch a Stock of true and ſolid Goodneſs, as could not be diſcovered (eſpecially thro' the Vail her Modeſty caſt before it) till Time drew it out, and ſtill adminiſtred matter to thoſe that beheld her, for a new and growing Affection. She envied no Perſons Condition, but was hugely pleas'd and contented in her own. She was a ſincere Chriſtian, an Ornament to her Husband, (by whom ſhe was dearly Beloved, and in her Memory highly Honour'd, as ſhe moſt juſtly deſerv'd it), and an extraordinary Bleſſing to this Family, who do reſignedly ſubmit to it as to what God has order'd, but think the Loſs of ſuch a Treaſure ſo great, that in this World they dare not hope to meet with any thing that can repair it.

And what is ſtill the Crown and Glory of all theſe Perfections, amidſt all this, she was, as I hinted, ſo *free from Oſtentation*, and ſo *oppoſite to any thing* that looked like *ſeeking Praiſe*, as nothing in this World ordinarily can be more. She was a Perſon, as of a very great, ſo, what makes it greater ſtill, of a very conceal'd Goodneſs. She uſed Arts to hide her Virtues, and would hardly be brought to acknowledge any thing to her juſt Praiſe, and did as truly take pains to avoid the Opinion of being Exeellent in any Endowments, as others do to obtain it. So that she was like the Sun wrapt up in a Cloud, her Rays were caſt all inward, and, ſo far as she could order it, shone only to her ſelf, and to Almighty God. She would, it ſeems, as far as she was able, be good altogether for his Sake, and ſeek no worldly Advantage by it: But at the ſame time she aſpried to be great in Goodneſs, she ſhunn'd the Reputation of being thought ſo.

Such were the Virtues, and ſo conſiderable were the Attainments of this Pious Soul in Righteouſneſs. And being ſo well ſtored in Goodneſs, it may well be expected ſhe ſhould have her ſhare in Comforts, and, as the Text ſays, have *Hope in her Death*. And ſo, indeed, it was. Her Death was very ſudden, ſuſpected by none, nor in all appearance by her ſelf, till ſhe awaked in the Jaws of it, and ſaid *She was a Dying*.

Dying. This was very ſhort warning. But tho' it may be ſudden, it is never too ſoon to a Good Chriſtian. A well-ſpent Life is ſuch a Preparation, that altho' it comes the moſt unexpected, it can never take them unprovided, but they may meet it upon any intimation. But this ſuddenneſs, tho' it could not indanger the ſafety, yet was it a mighty Tryal of the clear Conſcience, and firm Hopes of this excellent Perſon. If any thing had ſtuck upon her, or ſhe had been conſcious of any thing to affright her; then, no doubt, had been the Time to fear, when the Judge had ſent the Summons, and call'd her in to come before him. But, whether from the Applauſe of a clear Conſcience, which, having been hitherto a Faithful Guide, proved now a Comfort to her; or whether from the intimation of ſome good Angel, that was come to carry off his Charge (if Angels do then begin a Correſpondence, and give kind intimations when a Soul is juſt leaving the Body, and going to Converſe and be Fellow-Citizen with themſelves): From which ſoever of theſe Cauſes, I ſay, it hapned, thus it was, this Happy Soul in that Suprize, had a clear, chearful Confidence, and a foretaſte of that Joy and Peace God was preparing for her.

Tho' ſhe knew ſhe was going in haſte, ſhe could take time, and ſpend ſome of thoſe few minutes

ſhe

she had still remaining, to declare her mind in some Things which she would have ordered. And observing her Nurse that was attending her, to fall a weeping, with an even and undisturb'd Mind she rebuked her, and bid her not to weep for her, for she was going to be Happy, and to be an Angel in Heaven.

And thus I have endeavour'd to give some Account of this Excellent Person, and to lay out some of those Virtues in her, which may bring Honour to God, and the greatest Benefit to our selves, by our Godly Imitation of them. This, tho' to some who knew her not, or who looked not near or long enough upon her to discover a Goodness so silent and secret, it may seem an ample; yet to those who knew her best, perhaps will appear an imperfect Draught. But I pretend not to give a perfect Description of her. She was of such a modest Goodness, and her Virtues so industriously conceal'd, that I believe a just account of them is only known to God, and must then only be laid out at large to all the World, when he comes to reward openly what was done in secret. I have only design'd to draw this Fair Saint in such Virtues, as I desire from her Copy to make live things, and to translate into others Practice. For nothing is more instructing to the World, and more like to bring Virtue into Practise,

ctiſe, than to draw it out in the Lives and Acts of Pious Perſons. This ſhews men what they are to do in Religion, and withal that it is a feaſible thing; and therein both directs, and excites to Imitation. I am ſure there is much to be learn'd in ſuch a Pattern as this is, and as the World has great need, ſo I hope it will reap ſome Profit by ſuch Examples.

What further now remains for us, but to preſerve the Memory of her Great Virtues always freſh in our Minds, and expreſs the Copy of them in our Practice? For this is the beſt way of remembring the Dead, which brings in moſt Advantage to our ſelves, and moſt Honour to them, to imitate what was good in them; when the Piety, and Humility, and Juſtice, and Charity, and other Virtues of the Dead, are kept alive, and ſhewn in the Converſation of the living. It is only theſe Virtues which carried thoſe who are gone, and which can carry us too in the end to a joyful Reſurrection. Whereto in thy due Time, do thou, O! Bleſſed God, in thine abundant Goodneſs bring us all for Chriſt his ſake. *Amen.*

FINIS.